

2003 PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM

NOTIFICATION TO PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS:

On July 7, 2003, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) posted a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in the Federal Register for the 2003 Pre-Disaster Mitigation Competitive (PDM-C) Grant Program. The intent of the program is to provide funds to State and local governments for pre-disaster mitigation planning and projects that address natural hazards while also reducing reliance on funding from disaster assistance claims. Approximately \$120 million is available for PDM-C grants.

These funds will be awarded on a nationwide competitive basis with a FEMA established national priority on funding mitigation projects that address National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) repetitive loss properties. The maximum federal share requested cannot exceed \$3 million per project. Only state and local governments and special districts are eligible to apply.

Concurrent with the issuance of the NOFA, FEMA has opened a 90-day window for the submission of applications for funding under this program. OES has been identified as the State agency that is eligible to apply for assistance as an applicant. Other State agencies, local governments and special districts must apply through OES as sub-applicants.

This information is an overview of PDM-C requirements. OES recommends that sub-applicants refer to the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov/fima/pdm.shtm> for more complete information on the PDM-C grant program regulations and guidelines.

SUB-APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Application Preparation and Submittal

FEMA has developed an electronic application filing system that is accessible via the Internet at <https://portal.fema.gov>. OES is requiring sub-applicants to complete the PDM-C application using the FEMA developed e-grant system. In order to access this system, sub-applicants must request an access code from OES. The sub-applicant must provide a list of names of staff to be granted access to the system. This list must be submitted to OES via e-mail at oespdmcompetitive@oes.ca.gov. Access can be granted to each person on one or more of three levels: (1) view/print, (2) create/edit, and (3) sign/submit. The e-mail should identify the person's name, position and the access level(s) they require. PDM-C sub-grant applications must be received by OES on or before September 6, 2003. OES will review the sub-grant applications and forward the grant application to FEMA by the October 6, 2003, deadline.

Cost Share

If awarded, the sub-applicant is required to provide a minimum of 25 percent non-Federal cost share. The non-Federal cost share must be in direct support of the approved

activities and must be an eligible cost for PDM funding. Sub-applicants must identify the source of their matching funds in their applications. If the non-Federal cost share requirement cannot be met by the application deadline the sub-applicant must submit the application by the deadline with a notation of the delay of cost share availability in the Budget Narrative. The sub-applicant must also submit a letter to OES that will be forwarded to the FEMA Regional Director along with the application explaining the reason for the delay. This letter must provide assurance that the cost share will be available by November 5, 2003. By October 31, 2003, the sub-applicant must provide written certification to OES that the cost share has been approved and is available for use if the application is selected. OES will forward this certification to the FEMA Regional Director by November 5, 2003.

Benefit Cost Analysis

Sub-applicants are required to prepare benefit cost analyses for their projects. To be considered for the PDM-C program, projects must have a benefit to cost ratio of one or greater. Mitigation project with higher benefit to cost ratios will be more competitive. Sub-applicants are encouraged to use the FEMA-developed models to determine benefit to cost ratios for their projects. Any other methodology or software used to conduct the benefit cost analysis must be approved by the FEMA Regional Office and FEMA Headquarters in advance. Sub-applicants must provide documentation for all data used in their analysis.

Environmental/Historic Review Considerations

While sub-applicants are not required to conduct the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review that is mandatory before a grant can be awarded, sub-applicants must consider possible environmental and historic preservation impacts to determine how they may impact the project budget and schedule. If, after review of the project, FEMA determines that environmental or historic preservation treatment measures are required as a condition of the grant, only those costs included as part of the project budget at the time of application submission will be considered eligible grant costs. The amount of the grant will not be increased to cover any additional costs identified after the application deadline.

National Flood Insurance Program Participation

All sub-applicants must be participating in the NFIP if they have been identified as having a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). In addition, the community must not be on probation, suspension or be withdrawn from the NFIP.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Mitigation Planning

Mitigation planning activities, including the development of risk assessments, mapping activities (up to 30 percent of the total funds awarded) and information dissemination (up to 10 percent of the funds awarded) may be submitted for approval through the

competitive process for the development of mitigation plans. The benefit cost analysis and Environmental and Historic Preservation documentation are not required for mitigation planning activities. Sub-applicants may request a maximum of 5 percent of the total grant funding requested for management costs to support approved mitigation planning activities.

Mitigation Projects

Mitigation projects must primarily focus on natural hazards, but also may address hazards caused by non-natural forces. Projects should be technically feasible and ready to implement. Engineering designs must be included in the application. Sub-applicants may request a maximum of 5 percent of the total grant funding requested for management costs to support approved mitigation projects.

Based on the information provided in the Federal Register and the FEMA developed program guidance, OES has established the following priorities for the 2003 PDM-C grant program, to address the three most common types of natural hazards in California.

Flood Hazards

- *Elevations:* This is the elevation of a structure so that the first floor elevation is at least one foot above the 100-year flood level.
- *Acquisitions:* This consists of the purchase and removal of structures from the floodway and/or floodplain. Title to the acquired property is transferred to a public entity.
- *Relocation:* This is the removal and relocation of structures from the floodway or floodplain.
- *Restoration and/or Improvement of Culverts:* This may include the implementation of small scale mitigation measures or additional structural elements such as installation of culverts modified in size or type, or adjoining elements such as water conveyance devices (aprons, headwalls, and downspouts).
- *Drainage Improvements:* This includes those measures which improve drainage, redirect drainage, or retain or detain flood flows.

Seismic Hazards

- *Structural Mitigation of Fire Stations, Police Stations, Emergency Operations Centers, and City Halls. Priority will be given to the following construction types:*
 - Unreinforced Masonry Buildings
 - Concrete Frame with Masonry Infill Walls
 - Steel Frame with Masonry Infill Walls
- *Seismic Retrofit of Pendant Lighting and Suspended Ceiling Systems in K-14 Public Schools*
- *Seismic Bracing of Emergency Power or Communications Systems in Publicly Owned Medical Facilities*

Fire Hazards

- *Vegetation Management:* This includes projects that establish sustainable fuel breaks and defensible space adjacent to developed areas, through prescribed fire, grazing, and mechanical or manual clearing.

Being Competitive

Before deciding to apply for grants under this program, it is important to remember that the program is a nationwide competition. Please do not apply unless you have a project that will be competitive.

OES has determined that projects with certain attributes will be most competitive under this program. In general, projects should address the most imminent or recurring hazards, be well along in the planning and local approval process (completion of CEQA review recommended), have a source of non-Federal matching funds that will be available at the time of grant awards and have a high benefit cost ratio as calculated by FEMA models.

Further, after evaluating the FEMA benefit cost models, OES has determined that the following attributes, listed below by hazard type, yield the highest benefit cost ratio.

Flood Hazard

- Addresses an NFIP Repetitive Loss (RL) Community (36 in the state)
- Addresses NFIP Repetitive Loss (RL) Properties (2912 in the state)
- Addresses Repetitive Damaged Properties without NFIP at the time of the events that are in floodways or floodplains. These properties can include critical public facilities (fire stations, EOC, etc.), non-critical public facilities (schools, libraries, etc), residential properties and commercial properties.

Seismic Hazard

- Proximity to known active faults
- High probability of a damaging event
- Location on a soft soil site
- High-use/high-occupancy
- Structure designed/built before seismic design components were included in building codes, such as unreinforced masonry, pre-1980 tilt-up structures, non-ductile concrete frame structures.

Fire Hazard

- High recurrence interval
- Greater population at risk
- High number of structures/contents/infrastructure at risk

If you have any questions, please contact OES either by e-mail at pdmcompetitive@oes.ca.gov or call (916) 845 8150. If you call, please let the answering staff person know the purpose of your call.

